

REMARKS

This is in response to the Office Action dated February 9, 2007. In view of the foregoing amendments and following representations, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Initially, to facilitate the Examiner's reconsideration of the application, the specification and abstract have been reviewed and revised in order to make a few minor clarifying and other editorial amendments. Note that the changes to the abstract are submitted in the form of a substitute abstract. Copies of the amended portions of the specification, claims and abstract are attached.

By the above amendment, claims 1 and 8 are amended; claims 4-7 are cancelled; and claims 9-12 are newly presented. Thus, claims 1-3 and 8-12 are currently pending in the present application.

On pages 2-4 of the Office Action, the original claims are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Masui et al. (U.S. 6,945,259), Tomita et al. (U.S. 5,634,980), JP 6-106126 (JP '126), or JP 10-172945 (JP '945).

In order to clearly distinguish the present invention over the applied references, claim 1 has been amended to recite that the scattering prevention cup cleaner includes “a reverse side nozzle for horizontally supplying a cleaning liquid to the substrate holder in a direction toward the scattering prevention cup.”

With the present invention, as defined in claim 1, upon rotation of the substrate holder, the cleaning liquid from the reverse side nozzle simultaneously cleans an inner wall surface of

the scattering prevention cup and an upper surface of the substrate holder (see page 10, line 26 to page 11, line 23 of the specification).

Tomita disclose a substrate washing apparatus including a back surface rinse conduit 14 on the back side of a substrate 13 held by a substrate holder 12. The back surface rinse conduit 14 is branched into a chamber rinse nozzle 15, which has an opening directed towards the sidewall surface of a cleaning chamber 1, and a back surface rinse nozzle 16 having an opening directed towards the back surface of the substrate 13 (see Fig. 1). However, the rinse nozzle 15 of Tomita does not supply a cleaning liquid to the substrate holder in a direction toward the scattering prevention cup so as to simultaneously clean an inner wall surface of a scattering prevention cup and an upper surface of the substrate holder. Furthermore, it is noted that the Tomita rinse nozzles are located below the substrate holder 12. Therefore, it is submitted that the Tomita reference clearly does not meet each and every limitation of claim 1.

Further, with respect to claim 8, the Tomita rinse nozzle 15 does not simultaneously clean a substrate holder for holding and rotating the substrate, and an inner wall surface of a scattering prevention cup for circumferentially surrounding the substrate held by the substrate holder to prevent a substrate processing liquid supplied to the substrate from being scattered around, the substrate holder and the inner wall surface of the scattering prevention cup being cleaned by horizontally supplying a cleaning liquid from a reverse side nozzle to a surface of the substrate holder while rotating the substrate holder.

Further, it is apparent that none of the Masui, JP '126 and JP '945 references disclose or suggest a reverse side nozzle that serves as a scattering prevention cup cleaner for cleaning an

inner wall surface of a scattering prevention cup and as a substrate holder cleaner for cleaning a substrate holder. In fact, none of these references includes a nozzle that supplies a cleaning liquid horizontally to a rotating substrate holder for the above described purpose.


The remaining claims depend, directly or indirectly, from independent claim 1, and are therefore allowable at least by virtue of their dependencies.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the present application is now clearly in condition for allowance. The Examiner therefore is requested to pass this case to issue.

In the event that the Examiner has any comments or suggestions of a nature necessary to place this case in condition for allowance, then the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney by telephone to promptly resolve any remaining matters.

Respectfully submitted,

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

~~An object of the present invention to provide an~~ An
apparatus for processing a substrate through successive
5 steps including spin-drying the substrate with a single
processing facility while preventing the substrate from
being contaminated by a substrate processing liquid, etc.
~~An~~ The apparatus for processing a substrate ~~of the present~~
~~invention, including~~ includes a substrate holder for holding
10 and rotating a substrate, a scattering prevention cup for
circumferentially surrounding the substrate held by the
substrate holder to prevent a substrate processing liquid
supplied to the substrate from being scattered around, and a
scattering prevention cup cleaner for cleaning an inner wall
15 surface of the scattering prevention cup.